

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SECRET
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT Reconnaissance Regiment at Mostar
AirfieldPLACE
ACQUIRED

DATE OF II

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR. 23 Dec 1948

NO. OF PAGES 4

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. The Mostar airfield is located six kilometers south of Mostar. It is bounded on the east side by the Ploce-Mostar railroad line which has a branch line to the airfield. The dimensions of the field are 1,300 by 1,350 by 800 meters. It is operational throughout the year.
2. An unpaved runway approximately 100 by 1,000 meters crosses the airfield in a northwest to southeast direction. There are seven hangars, a radio and meteorological station, repair workshops, motor transport pool, fuel and ammunition dumps, and accommodation and hospital facilities. There are no anti-aircraft defenses or blast bays.
3. No. 3 VOK (an aerial unit) has its headquarters on the airfield, together with its own motor transport pool and workshops.
4. The 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was formed at Mostar in June 1947. It is directly under the Air Force Command and consists of three operational and a liaison squadron. There are 11 pilots in each operational squadron but only No. 2 squadron actually has the full complement now. There are, nevertheless, one or two more pilots than aircraft for the regiment.

a. No. 1 Squadron

Aircraft : Nine Spitfires

Personalities : Commanding Officer : Lieutenant Okanovic (Communist)
 Political Commissar : Lieutenant Grebol
 Technical Officer : Cadet Snidercic
 Pilots : Lieutenant Katic
 Second Lieutenant Cikes

b. No. 2 Squadron

Aircraft : Six Spitfires and three Hurricanes

Personalities : Commanding Officer : Lieutenant Kamel Devenica
 Technical Officer : Lieutenant Turk
 Adjutant : Second Lieutenant Bratic

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Class. CHANGED TO: TS

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

Auth: DDA REG. 77/1733

DDA REG. 1073

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Pilots : Lieutenant Prebak
 Lieutenant Petrisko
 Second Lieutenant Tantegel
 Cadet Cuckovic

c. No. 3 Squadron

Aircraft : Three Spitfires and five Harvards
 Personalities : Commanding Officer ; Captain?
 Technical Officer : W.O Kausevic (anti-Communist)
 Pilot : Lieutenant Kovacic

d. Liaison Squadron

Aircraft : Three P.O.2, one Spitfire IX, one Harvard, one Fieseler Storch, two unidentified Czechoslovak aircraft.

Personnel : The squadron has only two pilots

5. Headquarters is organized as follows:

Regimental Commander : Major Marianovic (as of 1948). Formerly in Royal Yugoslav Air Force.

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Chief of Staff : Captain Damianovic. Formerly in Royal Yugoslav Air Force. Age about 50. Communist. Assisted by two non-commissioned officers.

Political Commissar : Captain Stane Primosic.

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UDB Office : Captain and two civilian women.

Technical Officer : Lieutenant Zarko Rosic. Transferred from 41 Regiment at Sombor in June 1947. Promoted officer for services with partisans. Assisted by an NCO.

Administration Office: Lieutenant and second lieutenant.

6. The total strength of the regiment, including maintenance and specialist personnel (see below), is about 230, divided as follows:

60 - 70 officers
 50 non-commissioned officers
 100 - 120 aircraftmen

7. There are eight Hurricanes stationed on the field, of which only the three with No. 2 Squadron are operational. The other five are without tires, and the engines need complete overhauling. The Hurricanes are armed with 2 x 7.6mm machine guns in the wings. The four rocket launching devices in the wings have been removed.

8. The eight Hurricanes are part of the allotment of 15 originally belonging to 252 Squadron of the RAF which were flown to Skabrnje and handed over to Zemunik airfield where they remained until June 1947. In that month nine were flown to Mostar when 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was formed and six remained at Zemunik for repairs, which are unlikely to be completed because of the lack of spares. Of the nine originally at Mostar, one was destroyed in a crash.

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9. Of the 19 Spitfires with 1 Reconnaissance Regiment at Mostar, 16 are Mark V and three Mark IX. (There are nine in 1 Squadron, six in 2 Squadron, three in 3 Squadron and one in the Liaison Squadron.) Of these 19 Spitfires, however, only 15 are operational; the remaining four are under repair in the station workshops after having had their undercarriages damaged in landing.
10. The Spitfires are armed with 4 x 7.6 mm machine guns and 2 x 20 mm machine guns in the wings, and two rocket launching devices for 50 or 100 kg rocket bombs. They have been fitted with tires belonging to YAKs and Messerschmidts, since the reserves of original tires have been used.
11. The 19 Spitfires are part of the allotment of 21 originally belonging to 251 RAF Squadron which were left with the Yugoslavs at Skabrnje airfield in 1945. In June 1945 the Spitfires were flown first to Zemunik and then to Mostar, where they remained for some time in hangars. Two of the original 21 were destroyed in crashes.
12. Of the six Harvards with 1 Reconnaissance Squadron, only five are operational. The other has no undercarriage. The two machine guns with which they were originally armed have been removed. These aircraft were left by the RAF at Zemunik Airfield where they were used for a time as training aircraft.
13. The three PO-3 aircraft in the Liaison Squadron are fully operational. They were at Mostar before June 1947, when the Reconnaissance Regiment was first formed.
14. The Fieseler Storch aircraft in the Liaison Squadron is operational. It is used by the Station Commander. It was also at the airfield before June 1947.
15. The two Czechoslovak aircraft in the Liaison Squadron are single-engined two-seater monoplanes. Engines are 4-cylindered, 120 H.P., air-cooled. Cruising speed is 200 k.p.h. The aircraft are not armed. They arrived recently from Zemun.
16. The Regiment has one regular and one mobile workshop for minor repairs, under Second Lieutenant Josef Vodopivac. They are serviced by six men.
17. Major repairs are carried out in the aircraft repair workshops which are administered either by VOK or the Station Command. These workshops are in charge of a lieutenant and employ about 15 military and 25 civilian personnel.
18. The regiment has the following maintenance and specialist personnel:
 - 45 mechanics, or about one per aircraft
 - 45 assistant mechanics
 - 45 armorers
 - Six or seven electricians
 - Four radio technicians
 - Eight photographers
19. Engines are overhauled after 50 hours flying time in the Regimental workshops. Revision takes normally three days. After 300 flying hours the engines are sent for a complete revision to the Rajlovac workshops, and the aircraft to Zemun.
20. The regiment does not hold spares itself, but obtains them from stores maintained by the Station Command, which itself obtains them from No. 3 VOK. Spares for the British aircraft are in very short supply.
21. The only stores held by the regiment consist of a small quantity of clothing. All other requirements are obtained from the Station Command.

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22. The VOK has its own motor transport pool and workshops of which no details are known.

23. The airfield transport, under Lieutenant Bakija, consists of the following vehicles:

Two Bedford tankers for servicing the Hurricanes and Spitfires (with 95 - 100 octane fuel).
One German tanker for servicing the Harvards (with 92 octane fuel)
One Soviet tanker for lubricants
Two Soviet trucks used as photographic laboratories
Four Dodge trucks (used occasionally for towing aircraft)
One fire-fighting vehicle (team of five)
One German truck for towing the mobile workshops
One British truck fitted as an E/T vehicle for communication with aircraft in flight.
One British ambulance (team of two)
Two German motor cars for the Regimental and Station Commanders.

24. The regiment has to obtain permission from the Station Command before using these vehicles.

25. Station personnel number 200. The strength of No. 3 VOK is 100 to 150 men.

26. Each pilot on the average does one-half hour to one hour's flying per week. Activities include practice photographic sorties, either with single aircraft or in flights; mock aerial combats, recorded by camera; regimental formation flying, with flights of three or five aircraft and AA exercises with one or two aircraft towing AA targets for the benefit of an AA unit at Bocagnazzo near Zara.

27. There is no night flying since the airfield lacks the requisite installations.

28. The majority of the pilots have been trained in the USSR but only about half have had operational experience.

29. A large part of the maintenance personnel are Soviet-trained. Their general standard of efficiency is not high. A good part of non-specialist recruits are almost illiterate, and are given special schooling on the airfield.

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